I now call the attention of the Hon. Minister for Finance and Education to a matter of urgent public importance, viz., supply of text books to school children for the next year.

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : Mr Speaker, Sir. The policy of nationalisation of text books for elementary schools was accepted by Government on the recommendations of the Legislature Committee on Education. In pursuance of this policy the Government have laid down a phased programme for the publication of language text books both detailed and non-detailed for Standards I to VII. According to this programme, the following nationalised text book will be supplied to schools during 1962–63.

English text books for Standards V, VI and VII.

Tamil text books for Standard VII.

Non-detailed text books in English, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalar, Urdu and Kannada for Standard VII.

2. Under this scheme, the books in English and Tamil, as approved by the expert committees are printed by the Controller of Stationery and Printing. They are distributed through the authorised distributors in various districts. Agreements are executed for this purpose by the authorized book-sellers with the Director of Public Instruction who represents Government. In the case of books in Telugu, Malayalam, Urdu and Kannada the printing and distribution has been entrusted to private presses.

3. The English text books for Standards V and VI had been supplied through these authorized book-sellers even last year and there had been no complaints of delay. For the current year, i.e., 1962–63, Government have already issued orders for the distribution of English text books and the non-detailed text books (for Standard VII) through the same book-sellers.

4. Regarding prescription of text books for schools, the policy is to prescribe those books which are approved by the Text Book Committee. Panchayat Unions can therefore prescribe text books for elementary schools in their area only from among the approved text books. So far as nationalised text books are concerned, there is, obviously, no question of choice.

5. The Member has referred to long delays and even the payment of blackmarket price for the purchase of books in time. The Government have not received any complaints in this regard. If the hon. Member would bring any specific instance to the notice of Government, suitable action will be taken.

IV.—STATEMENT *RE* THE CYCLONE IN COIMBATORE AND MADURAI.

MR. SPEAKER : The Hon. Minister for Finance will now make a statement under Rule 82.

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* THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : I want to make the following statement regarding the cyclone that passed through Coimbatore and Madurai on 3rd May 1962 :—

Coimbatore

On Thursday, the 3rd May 1962 between 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. there was heavy rain with hail stone accompanied by gale at 40 miles per hour. Due to strong wind, many trees on road-side were uprooted. One tree fell on an empty compartment at the railway station. Road traffic was affected for about two hours. There was partial failure of power supply in the town. Telephone lines were cut in parts of the town. Many stalls at the All-India Swadeshi Exhibition were particularly damaged and the loss is estimated at Rs. 2,000. The pandal erected for the Annual Conference of Hind Mazdoor Sabha collapsed. Betel vines in Kuniamuthur area were affected. But the loss is negligible. Power supply has since been restored and telephone lines have been repaired. There was no loss of life or injuries to the general public. The situation is normal.

Madurai

A gale struck Madurai district also on 3rd May 1962. Three or four stalls in Madurai Chitrai Exhibition were dislodged due to the gale. But they were immediately propped up again. Some trees were uprooted and some thatched temporary summer pandals put up before shops in Bazaar Street in Madurai town were dislodged. Only slight damage were caused to eight thatched huts in Usandagiripatti and Kathapatti hamlet at Narasingapatti, Melur taluk. The damage per hut is estimated at not more than Rs. 5. No loss of life or cattle or damage to property in any other taluks has been reported.

V.—ANNOUNCEMENT.

(1) THE MADRAS GENERAL SALES TAX (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1962.

MR. SPEAKER : I have to announce to the House that the Governor has given his recommendation for the introduction in the Legislative Assembly of the Madras General Sales Tax (Amendment) Bill, 1962.

VI.—GOVERNMENT BILL.

THE HON. SRI R. VENKATARAMAN : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg leave to introduce the Madras General Sales Tax (Amendment) Bill, 1962.

MR. SPEAKER : The question is—

" That leave be granted for the introduction of the Madras General Sales Tax (Amendment) Bill, 1962 ".

The motion was put and carried and leave was granted.

THE HON. SRI R. VENKATARAMAN : Sir, I introduce the Bill.

MR. SPEAKER : The Bill is introduced.